

San José State University
Department of English & Comparative Literature
ENGL 1A: First-Year Writing

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Melody Westervelt
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Office Hours:	Tuesday, 10:30-11:30, and by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Tuesday/Thursday, 9-10:15
Classroom:	Clark Building, Room 238
Prerequisites:	Reflection on College Writing GE/SJSU Studies Category: GE Area A2 Written Communication

Course Format

Technology Intensive Course

This course relies heavily on two online tools: Canvas and Google Docs. Therefore, all students will need access to a laptop, and should bring it to every class meeting. Any student who needs to do so may check out a laptop for the semester at King Library.

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, and assignment instructions can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for checking the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

Course Description

ENGL 1A is an introductory writing course that will help you understand the writing process and the goals, dynamics, and genres of written communication. Through interpretation and analysis of texts, you will learn to think clearly and write effectively as you give form and coherence to complex ideas. You will explore writing for various audiences and rhetorical situations.

English 1A GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

1. Read actively and rhetorically
2. Perform the essential steps in the writing process (prewriting, organizing, composing, composing, revising, and editing) and demonstrate awareness of said performance
3. Articulate an awareness of and write according to the rhetorical features of texts, such as purpose, audience, context, and rhetorical appeals
4. Integrate your ideas and those of others by explaining, analyzing, developing, and criticizing ideas effectively in several genres
5. Demonstrate college-level language use, clarity, and grammatical proficiency in writing.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Can I Use I by Catherine Pendergast

Other Readings

All additional readings will be posted to Canvas.

Other technology requirements / equipment / material

Students should bring a laptop to every class meeting. Any student who needs to do so may check out a laptop for the semester at King Library.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Diversity

SJSU studies include an emphasis on diversity. You will engage integrated reading and writing assignments to construct your own arguments on complex issues that generate meaningful public debate. Readings for the course will include writers of different genders and from different socioeconomic classes.

Writing

Writing assignments give you repeated practice in all phases of the writing process: prewriting, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. This class requires a minimum of 8,000 words, at least 4,000 of which must be in revised final draft form. Because in-class writing is valued and you should be able to perform well in timed writing situations, at least one essay will be written in class. In addition, ENGL1A classes require multiple out-of-class essays. Essays must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced, and in MLA format.

Reading

There will be a substantial amount of reading for this class, some of which will come from assigned texts (below) and some of which will be from sources you locate.

English 1A Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, you are expected to spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. This means you should expect to invest no fewer than nine hours per week in your English 1A studies. Learn more about student workload in University Policy S12-3; see <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Details will be distributed and/or posted to Canvas for each assignment, which are listed below.

Assignment	Word Count	Total Points	% Grade	GELO
In-class Writing Assignments (8)	300 each	200	20	1, 2
Personal Narrative	750 (plus draft)	150	15	2, 3, 4, 5
Process Analysis	1000 (plus draft)	200	20	2, 3, 4, 5
Persuasive Essay	1000 (plus draft)	250	25	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Portfolio (Includes final reflection)	700-1000	100	10	1, 2, 4, 5
Participation	n/a	100	10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Total point value for the course is 1,000. Course grades are calculated using the following scale:

94% - 100% = A	84% - 86% = B	74% - 76% = C	64% - 66% = D
90% - 93% = A-	80% - 83% = B-	70% - 73% = C-	60% - 63% = D-
87% - 89% = B+	77% - 79% = C+	67% - 69% = D+	0% - 59% = F

Final Examination or Evaluation

Final Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you are required to turn in a portfolio that consists of selected examples of writing you produced for our class, including drafts. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas, and we will discuss this project throughout the semester.

Grading Information (Required)

To receive full credit, essays and reading responses must be submitted on time—at the start of class—on the posted due date. **Late work will be accepted up to one week after the deadline, but will be penalized a full letter grade.**

Our class relies heavily on the revision process. First drafts must be complete and workable, and demonstrate you have fully engaged with the assignment. An outline is not a draft. An insufficient first draft will affect the grade of the final draft.

In-class activities and Workshops are vital to our class, and participation in them is reflected in your final grade. If you have to miss class, you must contact me in advance.

Note: Students must receive a C- grade or higher to pass the class. If you are an UGRM in English, you must earn a D- or higher in English 1A to clear remediation.

Requirements for particular assignments vary, but in all cases essay grades reflect the paper's effectiveness, which is broken down into three major areas: **content** (this includes maturity and sophistication of thought), **organization**, and **expression**. Below are criteria by which essays are typically evaluated in first-year writing courses:

- An “A” essay is organized and well-developed, demonstrating a clear understanding and fulfillment of the assignment, written in a unique and compelling voice. It shows the student’s ability to use language effectively with a solid command of grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- A “B” essay demonstrates competence in the same categories as an “A” essay, but it may show slight weakness in one of these areas. It responds to the topic suitably and may contain some grammatical, mechanical, or usage errors.
- A “C” essay completes the requirements of the assignment, but it shows weaknesses in fundamentals, such as development. It may show weakness in mastery of grammar, mechanics, usage, or voice.
- A “D” essay neglects to meet all the requirements of the assignment or may be superficial in its treatment of the topic. It may lack development or fail to stay on topic. It may contain grammatical, mechanical, and/or usage errors that interfere with reader comprehension.
- An “F” essay does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment.

Classroom Protocol

In English 1A, much of the learning happens in class. Therefore, it is imperative that you attend class every day and participate in class activities and discussions. Class participation entails: (1) demonstrating that you’ve completed the readings, (2) contributing to discussions, and (3) completing in-class assignments, which include occasional writing in response to prompts. Electronic resources such as laptops, tablets, and smartphones may be used during class to compose some assignments, take notes, access course materials on Canvas, refer to a dictionary or thesaurus, or capture images of curriculum on white board. Please be sure that ringers, buzzers, bells, and alarms are turned OFF during class.

University Policies

University-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc., can be referenced at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/index.html>. You are also advised to visit the Frosh English webpage at http://www.sjsu.edu/english/frosh/program_policies.

Canvas Support

If you need technical support with Canvas, please click the "Help" button in course navigation (left side menu bar of Canvas screen). From there, you can access a list of resources. Please check the Guide on How to get help with Canvas.

English 1A: First Year Writing

Tentative Course Schedule

Week 1		Introduction to Class
	1/23	Introduction to Class
Week 2		Pre-Writing and Drafts Readings: "Shitty First Drafts" by Anne Lamott; "A Way of Writing" by William Stafford; "Responding - Really Responding - To Other Students' Writing" by Richard Straub
	1/28	Discussion of Lamott and Smiley In-Class Writing Assignment #1
	1/30	Discussion of Straub Explore the peer review process
Week 3		More Pre-Writing and Drafts Readings: Prendergast, 1-54; Amy Tan, "Mother Tongue"
	2/4	Discussion of Prendergast Introduce Personal Narrative Essay
	2/6	Discussion of Amy Tan In-Class Writing Assignment #2
Week 4		Now Start Writing! Readings: Prendergast, 55-96
	2/11	Discuss Prendergast In-Class Writing Assignment #3

	2/13	Workshop Personal Narrative
Week 5		Practicing Peer Review/Revising
	2/18	*** WORK FROM HOME DAY ***
	2/20	Due: Personal Narrative Draft Peer Review of Personal Narrative
Week 6		Which “errors” matter? And, what is “bad” writing? Reading: Prendergast, 97-130; “What’s Going On with Matthew McConaughey?” by Sonia Rao
	2/25	Discuss readings Contextualizing and diagnosing common writing errors
	2/27	Workshop Personal Narrative, Final Draft
Week 7		Organization and Voice Readings: How to Prepare a Dead Pharaoh by Adam Goodheart; How to Paint a Fresco by Adam Goodheart; How to Become a Better Writer by Lorrie Moore
	3/3	DUE: Personal Narrative, Final Draft Discussion of assigned readings Introduce Process Analysis Essay
	3/5	Brainstorming for Process Analysis Peer Discussion of topic ideas In-Class Writing Assignment #4
Week 8		Pre-writing, Again
	3/10	Workshop Process Analysis
	3/12	Due: Process Analysis First Draft Peer Review Process Analysis, first draft
Week 9		What exactly is Rhetoric?
	3/17	In-class Activity: Murder! Rhetorically
	3/19	Murder Mystery Activity In-Class Writing Assignment #5

Week 10		Thesis Readings: “Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation” by Jean M. Twenge; “The Case Against Chores” by Jane Smiley; “People Like Us” by David Brooks DUE: Google Group Review
	3/24	Discussion of assigned readings In-Class Writing Assignment #6
	3/26	Due: Process Analysis Final Draft In-Class Writing Assignment #7 (video response)
Week 11		SPRING BREAK
	3/31	No Class
	4/2	No Class
Week 12		Writing with a Purpose Readings: “School to Prison Pipeline” by Marilyn Elias; “‘A form of punishment’: Colin Kaepernick and the history of blackballing in sports” by Jack Moore; “When Poor People are Beaten for Seeking Help” by Mara Gay and Emma Goldberg;
	4/7	In-class Discussion: Writing for the purpose of advocacy. In-class Writing Assignment #8 Introduce Persuasive Essay
	4/9	***Bring an article to class which advocates for an issue you believe is important.*** In-class group discussion of articles/topics chosen by students.
Week 13		Let’s Argue about What Matters
	4/14	Workshop Persuasive Essay
	4/16	Due: Persuasive Essay First Draft Persuasive Essay Peer Review
Week 14		Persuasive Essay Workshop
	4/21	Workshop Persuasive Essay, Draft 2 One-on-one discussions with instructor
	4/23	DUE: Google group review Workshop Persuasive Essay
Week 15		The Home Stretch
	4/28	Discuss Portfolios and Final Reflection

	4/30	Due: Persuasive Essay Final Draft Workshop Portfolios
Week 16		The End!
	5/5	In-Class Writing Assignment: Final Reflection
	5/7	Complete Portfolios
Final Exam	5/19	Due: Portfolio due to Canvas by 9:30am